



## **Participatory, Responsive Governance in Niger: Updated Impact Evaluation Project Description 2015-2017**

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## Impact Evaluation Overview

This document provides an overview of the strategy and action plan for AidData's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) component of USAID's Participatory and Responsive Governance (PRG) program in Niger. The overarching goal of the PRG project is to strengthen the collective responsiveness of the Nigerien government and its citizens to priority public needs in order to help mitigate what Nigeriens call a '*crise de confiance*' or 'crisis of confidence' between citizens and the state and ultimately bolster stability and governance in one of the world's most fragile states. The project aims to strengthen collective responsiveness through three channels: 1) political party campaigns; 2) collective engagement and coordination of multiple stakeholders (government, non-government, donors) to undertake reforms that address citizen priorities; and 3) capacity-building of local think-tanks, media, NGOs, and civil society to promote participatory governance.

This impact evaluation will focus on evaluating USAID's Participatory, Responsive, Governance - Principal Activity Program (PRG-PA). The PRG is designed to be a principal contributor to the achievement of Development Objective 2 under the Niger Operational Framework: *Citizen Confidence in the state increased among target populations*.

Post-electoral activities focused on targeted citizen priorities under Phase 1 will provide initial contributions to results under IR 2.2: *Equitable access to public sector services increased in target areas* while continuing to contribute to the participatory processes under IR 2.2, including civic engagement in governance.

Our impact evaluation will focus on the post-electoral activities and IR 2.2. Our objectives for the impact evaluation follow those stipulated in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan provided in the PRG Program Description (PD) (p. 28), which states in part that:

"Given the innovative nature of this proposed project, the project design team recognizes the value of also developing an external impact evaluation to test the fundamental hypotheses and theory of change embedded in the project design, and to determine whether changes in outcome measures are directly attributable to the project. This aligns with the USAID Evaluation Policy, which requires new and innovative or pilot projects to be subject to impact evaluation and thus the counterfactual analysis needed to determine causality. We also recognize the particular importance of being able to show attributable results in USAID governance programming, and see evaluation of this project as an opportunity to try to prove intervention efficacy. Lastly, an impact evaluation of aspects of the PRG principal activity in its Phase 1 would allow for findings to be applied to improved project design and implementation in the anticipated Phase 2 scale-up. In this way, the impact evaluation will also play an important formative assessment role for the project."

## **Treatment: PRG-PA Implementation**

USAID selected Counterpart International (CPI) to implement the five-year Participatory, Responsive, Governance - Principal Activity Program (PRG-PA). CPI's program will seek to increase the capacity of stakeholders – including Civil Social Organizations (CSOs), traditional and religious leaders, government and political parties, the media, and private sectors.

CPI's treatment plan includes a multi-stage program that includes three different sets of activities. The overall outcome goal is to make elections more responsive to priority public needs. This evaluation will focus on activity 2. This activity includes conducting government systems mapping to inform collective action initiatives (activity 2.1), building a set of master dialogue facilitators (activity 2.2), brokering commitments around targeted citizen priorities through local partner dialogues (activity 2.3), supporting media production of reliable information that supports collective action (activity 2.4), initiate three national-level working groups with government, business, academic, and civil society representatives focused on health, education, and security (activity 2.6), and train government and non-government leaders on the Service Improvement Action Planning (SIAP) tool (activity 2.9).

CPI plans to accomplish activity 2.1 by identifying individuals who can influence government priorities and can champion and create advocacy campaigns. These individuals will be pulled together in a systems map that will improve the understanding of the different networks of influence within the government. The maps will be created based on topic, type of reform, key individuals and institutions, policy decision points, and changes in the system over time. This mapping exercise seeks to increase the overall understanding of how to and who to negotiate with in government systems, especially those who might seem like unlikely allies. They will be used as points of reference as CPI and partners develop their collection action plans.

Under activity 2.1, CPI will also be creating media maps of media organizations that specify in communications on security-related topics. Along with the mapping exercise, CPI will also run a perception survey in Agadez, Diffa, Niamey, and Zinder to understand citizen views of the security sector in Niger. The survey results will highlight priorities for the planned activities, specifically focusing on improving communication between communities and government actors on security issues.

As part of Activity 2.2, CPI will train up to six sub-grantees from civil society groups and the private sector to run multi-stakeholder dialogs that will cover topics that emerge from local election debates and conversations. This will include topics such as service delivery problems and gaps in education, health, and security. Two individuals (one man and one woman) from each selected sub-grantee will receive training on “asset-based community mobilization; cross-cultural communication; socially inclusive,

participatory facilitation methods and dialogues for social, political, and policy change.”<sup>1</sup> These ‘Master Dialogue Facilitators’ will then, over time, be expected to train additional facilitators from their organization.

The trained ‘Master Dialogue Facilitators’ will then lead local partner dialogues as part of activity 2.3. These dialogs intend to create a forum where different community members will be able to build partnerships, utilize resources, and identify common goals. The dialogues will include municipal leaders and regional councilors, community groups, private sector actors (such as business based in regions), *fadas*, Cadres de Concertation (CDC), women’s cooperatives, and other local groups. Activity 2.3 will also include 10 town hall meetings in specific regions. These town hall meetings will include municipal leaders, the media, CSOs and other community groups, religious and traditional leaders, and private sector representatives. These meetings will address health, education, and other issues related to security in order to identify issues that collective action initiatives can target.

CPI also intends to train media partners to cover these events as part of activity 2.4. This will include holding workshops for media actors to train them on effective interviewing techniques and how to discuss important priority issues with stakeholders and citizens. These media actors, which will include radio stations, televisions, and print partners (local and national magazines), will then cover the dialogues to insure public transparency and encourage action around dialogue outcomes.

Activity 2.6 will work on creating three national-level working groups that will be made up of government, business, academic, and civil society members. These groups will focus on discussing health, education, and security issues. The members will meet to review current education and health service delivery issues and communication problems in the security sector. These groups will produce recommended policy and legislation as well as the actors that should be involved in implementing those measures.

The last activity is activity 2.9, which will introduce monitoring tools for citizens and government officials. One of these tools is the Service Improvement Action Planning (SIAP) tool. CPI will train citizens and government officials to use the SIAP tool to record the priorities that come from the dialogues. They will then seek to use this tool to achieve the dialogue identified service improvements identified by monitoring progress on a regular schedule and reporting results and outcomes. Monitoring tools will also include citizen surveys results and other quantitative measurements.

In addition to these activities, CPI added a security specific modification in late September 2016. As of early October, the Nigerien government delayed elections by 2.5 years. Given this delay, CPI has been instructed to not run their election related activities. For more information on CPI’s work, see CPI’s “PRG-PA – Y1 Annual Workplan (Feb 2016 – Feb 2017)”.

1 Counterpart International, “Participatory Responsive Governance – Principal Activity (PRG-PA) Annual Work Plan”, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

## Summary of Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy Impact Evaluation Design and Implementation

AidData will implement the M&E strategy and impact evaluation (IE) in collaboration with USAID Niger, DRG, and Counterpart International. AidData staff and affiliated researchers will conduct the impact evaluation. The co-Principle Investigators (PIs) on the project include: Ariel BenYishay (AidData Chief Economist, Assistant Professor of Economics at the College of W&M), Philip Roessler (Assistant Professor of Government at the College of W&M), and Lisa Mueller (Assistant Professor, Macalester College).

The PIs will focus the impact evaluation on the second project outcome of the PRG: improved collective responsiveness through increased multi-stakeholder contributions to public goods provision, or public goods (PG) reform implementation, for short. In particular, the IE will assess the degree to which the CPI's strategy for increased multi-stakeholder coordination and collective action leads to change in the coverage and quality of public goods that meet citizen priority needs.

The other project outcomes of the PRG—responsiveness of political parties and local capacity-building to promote participatory governance—will not be *directly* evaluated in this impact evaluation, though the interactive effects of party responsiveness and capacity-building with PG reform implementation will be assessed.

The evaluation will employ a randomized design to test whether the PRG project on PG reform implementation leads to the theory of change motivating the intervention, in which research, dialogue and local action catalyzed by improved multi-stakeholder coordination and contributions lead to improvements in the coverage and quality of the targeted public goods that Nigerien citizens consider top priority. The IE will employ a randomized design that entails selecting 24 random communes out of 48 to receive the PG reform implementation program.

This randomized design will allow us to causally estimate the effect of the PRG project intervention using panel surveys and changes in objective measures of public goods provision and access. We propose collecting the following data to allow us to identify the impact of the intervention:

### Proposed Three-Year Evaluation Data Collection (2015-2018)

1. Baseline survey at household- and cluster-level on socio-economic and socio-cultural indicators; political attitudes and engagement; strength of informal and formal institutions; multi stakeholder coordination and contributions; public goods provision and access; citizen preferences for public goods. This includes surveys with randomly selected households in treatment and control communes as well as interviews with commune level officials and government officials.

2. Midpoint checks for compliance and change across key indicators for admin and community-level data.
3. Endline survey and qualitative analysis at commune/government level, household, and cluster-level indicators and administratively measured behavioral data.

A timeline for the evaluation is described below, but the key aspects of the randomized roll-out is that only the communes assigned to the treatment group will be the targets for the PRG PG reform program for the duration of the evaluation, currently expected to last approximately two years.

The randomization will be stratified by region, urban and rural designation, and those that have and have not received activity one of the PRG PG program. Statistical tests for the randomization will be made using randomization inference techniques to maximize statistical power.

This rigorous research design and comprehensive data collection strategy will allow us to evaluate the degree to which the PG reform implementation program produces change in the coverage and quality of public goods that meet citizen priority needs and strengthen citizen confidence in the state.

In addition to the analysis produced for USAID, the researchers will have the right to use the data to publish in academic and policy outlets. Drs. BenYishay, Roessler, and Mueller, together with USAID, will be solely responsible for keeping and maintaining versions of the data that contain identifiable information about subjects. All data will comply with USAID research and open data policies. Other parties will have access to anonymized data 6 months after the completion of the final evaluation report. This 6-month embargo period will allow the PIs to finalize their report. The data will be fully anonymized and secured before sharing with any third-party researchers.

### ***Randomization Process and Sampling Frame***

AidData completed the randomization of communes for Activity 2 of the Niger PRG - PA program to be led by CPI. The sample frame for the randomization included only communes that were selected by CPI based on criteria that reflected the security conditions and existing organizational connections by CPI's sub-awardees. CPI identified 48 communes that fit these criteria. CPI has project funding and capacity to administer Activity 2 in 24 of these 48 eligible communes. Given this constraint, in order to distribute the Activity's benefits fairly among these 48 communes and to better evaluate their impacts, AidData randomly selected the 24 "treatment" communes.

Out of the communes provided by CPI, AidData stratified the randomization based on three factors: region, urban or rural, and whether or not they are part of CPI's initial Activity 1. This created 10 sets of communes, each of which shared identical values for these factors (i.e. belonged to the same region, were similarly urban/rural, and will experience/not experience Activity 1). The numbers of communes within

each set varied: some sets contain as few as three communes, while others contain as many as nine. The aim was to select approximately half of the communes within each set to be in the treatment group (In cases where the number of communes within each set was odd, the number of communes to be selected for treatment was randomly rounded up/down).<sup>2</sup> This procedure ensured that equal number of Activity I communes were randomly selected into treatment and control groups, and that approximately half of each region's urban communes and approximately half of each region's rural communes.

The final randomized assignment was conducted using the STATA statistical software on September 16, 2016.

## Theory of Change

One of the core objectives of the PRG-PA is to improve collective (government and citizen) responsiveness to priority public needs by increasing the capacity of Nigeriens to undertake and sustain collective action that holds their representatives accountable. Few institutions are purported to be as critical for responsive government as political accountability, in which citizens possess the capabilities and capacity to hold the government answerable for its policies.<sup>3</sup> Extensive research suggests a strong, positive association between broad-based political accountability and the effective provision of public services;<sup>4</sup> even limited accountability in authoritarian regimes is found to improve human development.<sup>5</sup>

There are two key limitations of existing literature on this subject, however. First, most rely on observational data (cross-national datasets that analyze associations between indicators of accountability and provision of public services) to draw inferences about the effect of political institutions on government responsiveness. The problem with such an approach is isolating precisely how much institutions of accountability matter for the provision of public services. It could be that this association arises due to reverse causality: the provision of public services (which themselves could be supplied for exogenous reasons—for example the threat of external war) leads to political accountability.<sup>6</sup> Or it could be the case that the association between accountability and public services is spurious; both are a function

<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that there need not be exactly equal numbers of communes in the treatment group and control groups within each set. What is important is that the assignment of a commune to the group is random.

<sup>3</sup> Besley, Timothy. 2006. *Principled Agents?: The Political Economy of Good government*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>4</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, B., et al. 2003. *The Logic of Political Survival*. Cambridge, MA, MIT Press. Adsera, A., et al. (2003). "Are you Being Served? Political Accountability and Quality of Government." *Journal of Law, Economics, and organization* 19(2): 445-490.

<sup>5</sup> Miller, M. K. 2015. "Electoral Authoritarianism and Human Development." *Comparative Political Studies* 48 (12).

<sup>6</sup> Fukuyama, Francis. 2011. *The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French Revolution*. New York Farrar, Straus and Giroux.



of a third unobserved variable. Thus, accountability does not have as powerful an effect on responsive government as we would expect.

A second limitation is existing cross-national studies tend to focus primarily on the role of structural or historical factors in accounting for the emergence of the accountability-responsiveness nexus—such as the structure of the economy (the degree to which it is dependent on natural resources), forms of colonialism, history of state centralization or societal fractionalization, a culture of meritocracy, or geography. While it is critical to understand the long-run processes underpinning institutional variation, these studies are less valuable for understanding what policy interventions in the short-term are effective at bringing about more accountable and responsive governments.

This impact evaluation aims to help fill this gap in the literature. It will rigorously test the effect of a participatory and governance program on improving political accountability and government responsiveness to citizen priorities. One of the central components of the program is a series of multi-stakeholder dialogues that bring together community leaders, municipal and regional councilors, private sector actors, professionals and citizens to confer upon, design and initiate Regional Development Plans (PDRs) and Communal Development Plans (PCDs). The expectation is the multi-stakeholder dialogues will catalyze development and government responsiveness both in terms of process and outcomes: the dialogues are intended to serve as focal points, or coordination mechanisms, for a diverse set of actors to come together to bring multiple perspectives to bear on the challenge of community development as well as marshalling the resources and forging the strategic partnerships necessary to ensure the development plan is implemented.

Beyond its effects on coordination and resource mobilization, multi-stakeholder dialogues are theorized to have important governance benefits, which are seen as critical for sustainable development.<sup>7</sup> In eliciting the participation and contributions of a diverse set of actors the dialogues enable an inclusive decision-making process, which is seen as a key source of legitimacy.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the formalization of collective decision-making procedures and a plan of action facilitates common knowledge amongst participants and the constituencies they represent, which not only improves transparency but also accountability as the stakeholders are seen to commit to implement the plan. Though there are no sanctioning mechanisms built into the PRG, there is a strong media component to the program that will publicize the dialogues and the commitments coming out of them, which are intended to increase awareness and raise the costs for the stakeholders if they fail to follow through.

Taken together, the use of multi-stakeholder dialogues is expected to improve local government responsiveness through multiple channels—improving the capabilities of community elites to craft and

<sup>7</sup> Bäckstrand, Karin. "Multi-stakeholder Partnerships for Sustainable Development: Rethinking Legitimacy, Accountability and Effectiveness." *European Environment* 16.5 (2006): 290-306. Hemmati, Minu. 2002. *Multi-stakeholder Processes for Governance and Sustainability: Beyond Deadlock and Conflict*. New York: Routledge.

<sup>8</sup> Hemmati, Minu. 2002. *Multi-stakeholder Processes for Governance and Sustainability: Beyond Deadlock and Conflict*. New York: Routledge.

implement a development plan that addresses citizen public priorities while ensuring this plan of action is seen as legitimate and that it actually gets implemented.

Most existing social science research on the efficacy of multi-stakeholder dialogues tends to focus on international governance and rely primarily on qualitative evidence.<sup>9</sup> As far we can tell, there have been no experimental studies on the effect of multi-stakeholder dialogues on local development. Thus this impact evaluation has the potential to make a broader contribution to development strategies in low-income countries.

A second innovation of the impact evaluation is it will also evaluate the efficacy of follow-on informational interventions to sustain public discussion and facilitate collective action. There is an emerging literature on the effectiveness of informational campaigns on government performance and the quality of services. While some of these interventions have been found to be quite effective and cost-efficient—for example, the provision of information on the quality of healthcare in one's community relative to other communities and the national average led to significant improvements in health service provision in Uganda<sup>10</sup>—others have found that informational interventions do not always translate into increased civic and political engagement, improved accountability, and better services.<sup>11</sup>

In this study, we will analyze the additive effect of messaging citizens to remind them of the commitment elites in their communities made in the multi-stakeholder dialogues and to provide a status report on the degree to which the stakeholders are making good on their promise to initiate and implement a development plan. To do so, the PIs may plan to use SMS to message a randomly selected subset of citizens the progress (or lack thereof) that the local government has made in addressing citizen public priorities and to emphasize the citizens' responsibility to continue to monitor progress to ensure its future implementation. We propose that this messaging should not only be specialized—directed at individual citizens to increase their personal sense of responsibility<sup>12</sup>—but also provides concrete examples as to how their fellow citizens are acting on the information they have received to improve government performance.

<sup>9</sup> See for example, Bäckstrand, Karin. "Democratizing Global Environmental Governance? Stakeholder Democracy after the World Summit on Sustainable Development." *European Journal of International Relations* 12.4 (2006): 467-498.

<sup>10</sup> Björkman, Martina, and Jakob Svensson. 2009. Power to the People: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment on Community-Based Monitoring in Uganda. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 124(2): 735-69.

<sup>11</sup> Olken, B. A. 2007. "Monitoring Corruption: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia." *Journal of Political Economy* 115 (2). Banerjee, Abhijit V., et al. "Pitfalls of Participatory Programs: Evidence from a randomized evaluation in education in India." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* (2010): 1-30. Humphreys, Macartan, and Jeremy Weinstein. "Policing politicians: citizen empowerment and political accountability in Uganda preliminary analysis." *Columbia University. Unpublished manuscript* (2012). Lieberman, Evan S., Daniel N. Posner, and Lily L. Tsai. "Does Information Lead to More Active Citizenship? Evidence from an Education Intervention in Rural Kenya." *World Development* 60 (2014): 69-83.

<sup>12</sup> Grossman, G., et al. (2015). Can SMS-Mobilization Increase Citizen Reporting of Public Service Deficiencies to Politicians?, Working Paper.

## ***Hypotheses and Measures:***

Elite-level hypotheses include:

1. Multi-stakeholder dialogues will improve coordination and strategic ties between community elites.
2. Multi-stakeholder dialogues will strengthen the representativeness of development processes.
3. Multi-stakeholder dialogues will increase the resources local and regional governments devote to local service delivery.

Elite-level measures for above hypotheses:

- Elite expectations about the dependability and commitment of other elites to address citizen priorities
- Elites more likely to identify a diverse set of agents (beyond state authorities) to be important for community-level development (e.g., Who are the most important actors to engage for bringing about development in your commune?)
- Local government spending on service delivery (pledged spending verses actual spending on development projects)

Government performance and legitimacy hypotheses include:

4. At endline, Multi-stakeholder dialogues will increase the perceived legitimacy of the government among citizens in the commune conditional on progress on the implementation of the development plan.
5. At endline, multi-stakeholder dialogues will strengthen citizen perceptions that the government is responsive to their needs and demands conditional on progress on the implementation of the development plan.
6. At endline, multi-stakeholder dialogues will increase citizen perceptions that their government is democratic conditional on progress on the implementation of the development plan.
7. At endline, multi-stakeholder dialogues will reduce citizen perceptions that the local government is corrupt conditional on progress on the implementation of the development plan.

Measures for government performance and legitimacy:

- Citizen perceptions of government legitimacy (e.g., government has the right to make citizens pay taxes)
- Citizen perceptions of local government responsiveness (e.g., in your opinion, how responsive do you think the local government has been to addressing citizens' developmental needs and wants)

- Citizen perceptions of democracy (e.g., In your opinion how much of a democracy is Niger today? Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in Niger?)
- Citizen perceptions of corruption

Collective Action hypotheses:

8. Multi-stakeholder dialogues will increase citizen political participation.
9. Multi-stakeholder dialogues will increase likelihood citizens sign a petition to ensure the government invests in public priorities.
10. Multi-stakeholder dialogues will increase the likelihood citizens send an SMS to commune government to insist they address citizen priorities

Measures:

- Citizen participation (e.g., voting in local elections, attending rally, participating in demonstration, reaching out to government official)
- Citizens sign petition at end of survey we administer
- Citizens respond to SMS solicitation to voice opinion to local government

Informational interventions<sup>13</sup>

11. Radio broadcasts publicizing the outcome and status of the development plans drawn up at the multi-stakeholder dialogues will amplify hypothesized effects detailed above.
12. OPTIONAL: Targeted SMS messages to citizens publicizing the outcome and status of the development plans drawn up at the multi-stakeholder dialogues will amplify hypothesized effects detailed above.

## Sampling Design and Power

### *Household survey sample design*

Ideally the household survey will be a sample of 1,200 households using stratified random sampling. Within each of the 48 communes in our randomization frame, we will randomly sample 2 enumeration areas, within which we will sample either 12 or 13 households. Interviews with this sample of households

<sup>13</sup> This hypothesis depends on whether we do the informational interventions and, if we do, whether they cross-cut all communes or we just do them in communes with the dialogues. Professors could complete a full factorial design and perhaps focus on the informational interventions as an invitation for citizen feedback for local government.

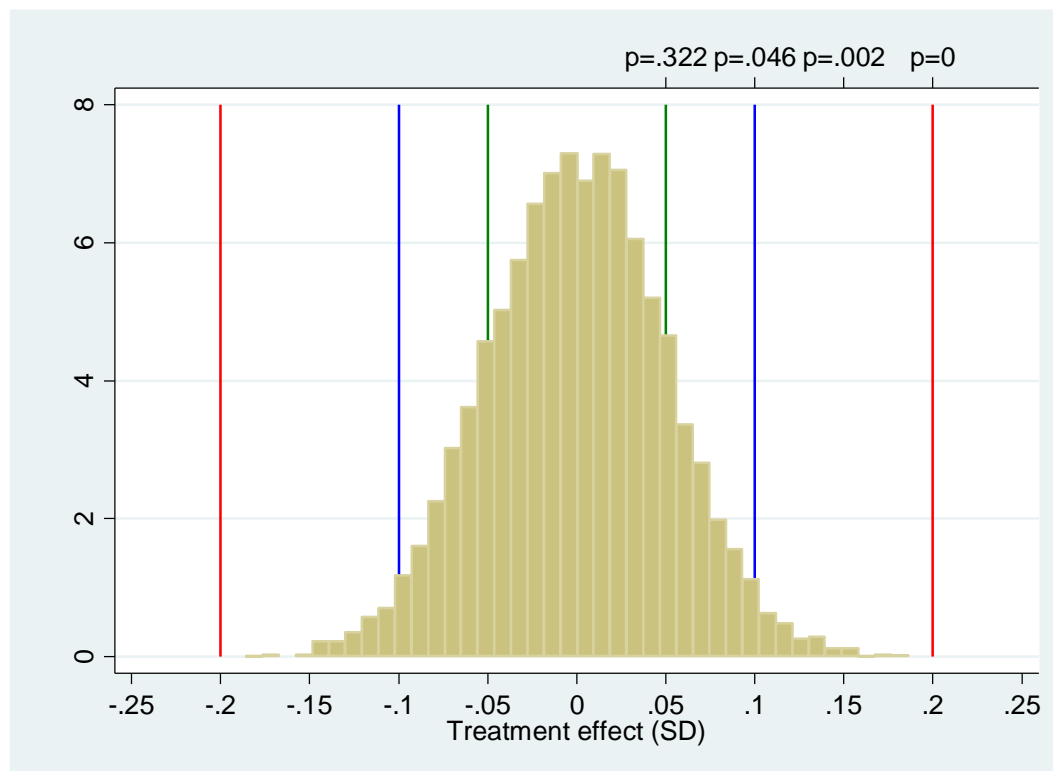
will be conducted at baseline and then repeated at endline to maintain a balanced panel data structure at the household level (with random replacement of attriting households).

The household survey will collect information on basic household indicators such as occupation, education level, poverty, religion, and connectivity (such as access to phones, internet, radio, and other news sources). Survey questions will also measure household's political views by including questions about political views and parties, elections, government officials, and trust and relationships to local and national leaders. In order to measure local views on priority needs, the survey will measure local individual's thoughts on how effective local and national governance has been, how accessible civil services are, important local and national issues, and how local and national government priorities match local household's needs.

This sample size will allow us to detect standardized treatment effects of 0.05 or greater. We will use a number of techniques to maximize precision available from our sample. First, we will use randomization inference approaches to determine exact p-values under the sharp null hypothesis of no treatment effects for any unit (as specified Gerber and Green 2015). Second, we will use repeated measures across rounds. Third, we will aggregate multiple measures of common concepts into standardized indices, thereby guarding against multiple comparisons while maximizing the precision with which each concept is measured (Kling, Liebman and Katz 2007).

We used simulations to confirm that our sample design will allow us to detect treatment effects of 0.1 standard deviations with 95.4% confidence (and 0.2 deviations with >99% confidence). We obtained survey responses from the Afrobarometer Round 6 carried out in Niger in 2015 and estimated the intra-cluster correlation and means of the seven outcomes most closely related to our evaluation (limiting the sample to those regions covered by the project). We then simulated 10,000 samples that match these correlations and means. We then simulate 10,000 random assignments across these samples under the sharp null hypothesis of no treatment effects and measure how many of these yield treatment effects of each size. The results of this simulation (shown in the figure below) indicate that only 4.6% of placebo assignments generate treatment effects as large as 0.1 standard deviations. We thus conclude that our design is well-powered to detect even moderately sized treatment effects.

**Figure 1: Simulation Results**



### ***Commune Level Official Interview Details***

CPI outlined in their workplan the goal of building accountability and government capacity. Dialogues are designed to advance that goal by inviting commune-level officials to share their perspectives on health, education, and security in the context of the postponed 2017 local elections. To measure the impact of these interventions, enumerators will interview commune-level officials at baseline and endline on their knowledge in the following areas: leadership and strategic management, program management and quality control, accounting and financial management, financial sustainability, human and material resources, and external relations and communications. Interviews will also ask about officials' levels of contact with citizens.

### ***Government Official Interview details***

Government officials, including staff from health, defense, interior, and justice ministries, will participate in two-day workshops in Niamey along with regional-level community actors. They will learn advocacy

strategies and tactics emphasizing nonpartisan, evidence-based approaches to addressing public needs. They will also discuss how political parties can tailor their platforms to citizens preferences and how to bridge formal and informal sectors. Baseline and endline interviews will measure government officials' familiarity with citizen needs and preferences, political party platforms, and the Political Economy Analysis (PEA) framework that CPI will use to structure the workshops. Interviews will again ask about officials' levels of contact with citizens.

## **Activities and Deliverables**

Scoping study Fall 2015 and Spring 2016: Lisa Mueller traveled to Niger to engage and discuss with USAID-Niger on results of Political Economy Analysis (PEA), design of PG Reform Implementation Program, and design of impact evaluation. Professor Mueller submitted trip readouts for both.

Draft Impact Evaluation Design, Fall 2016: Drawing on Program Description document, PEA, and scoping trip, PIs draft design of impact evaluation. The PIs will work together with the implementing partner M&E specialist to tailor the impact evaluation approach based on their implementation strategy. Once the scoping study is complete, the impact evaluation design will be provided to USAID/ Niger and USAID/DRG within three months. We will solicit USAID feedback on the draft impact evaluation design and then revise to produce a final evaluation design within one month of receiving USAID feedback. There will also be an independent peer review of the impact evaluation design, described in greater detail below.

Baseline Data Collection and Pre-program Implementation Winter 2016: Once the evaluation design is finalized, we will begin the process of developing the baseline data collection including the set of questions for the surveys and the qualitative analysis protocol (including household interviews and leader surveys). We will work together with the implementing partner M&E specialist to customize the baseline data collection questions and approach based on their implementation strategy. Data collection tools will be reviewed by the USAID Niger Office and its implementing partner (NORC) who will be tasked with local data collection. The Program Manager will travel to Niger for enumeration training and initial baseline implementation. Alternatively, or in conjunction, a staff person from NORC will travel to Niger to facilitate enumeration training. The team will coordinate with the PG Reform Implementation Program on randomization strategy. Once the baseline evaluation is complete, a draft report will be provided to USAID/Niger and USAID/DRG within three months. We will solicit USAID feedback on the draft report and then revise to produce a final report within one month of receiving USAID feedback.

PG Reform Implementation Program, Summer 2017: At least one PI travels to Niger to monitor program rollout. Field Coordinator will also be available for monitoring of project rollout.

Endline Analysis, Spring/Summer 2018: PIs travel to Niger to coordinate on endline analysis. The endline analysis, which we expect to occur during the spring/summer of 2018, will directly follow up on the baseline and also include new information not anticipated in the baseline. Once the endline analysis is complete, a draft report will be provided to USAID/Niger, HESN and DRG within three months. We will solicit USAID/Niger and USAID/DRG feedback on the draft report and then revise to produce a final report within one month of receiving USAID feedback and submit to USAID/Niger, HESN and DRG.

## **Reporting Requirements**

As previously mentioned, AidData will adhere to reporting requirements of HESN, USAID/DRG and USAID/Niger. USAID/DRG has a primary interest in ensuring the quality, rigor, and policy and academic relevance of its impact evaluations. Broad standards for co-funding include a focus on programs that are: 1) untested; 2) have the potential for replication in other contexts; 3) are strategically important for the Mission; or 4) are innovative in design or substance.

Meeting such standards is built into USAID/DRG's reporting requirements. As such, USAID/DRG requires a peer review of the draft evaluation plan by other academics before co-funding is applied and research activities occur. The evaluation design document should be thought of a pre-analysis plan that outlines the theory of change behind the evaluation and evaluated experimental interventions, specific hypotheses to be tested, data collection tools planned along with data collection strategy (sample sizes, power calculations, geographic locations, etc.) This document should be approximately 30 pages in length, and initially prepared after the PIs complete their scoping trips. (There is further guidance on the format available.)

The peer review of the evaluation design can be facilitated formally through the Experiments in Governance and Politics (EGAP) group at Columbia University, of which USAID/DRG is an institutional member. Members of EGAP have signed full non-disclosure agreements to allow them to comment on in-design evaluation plans. The peer review will focus both on the technical soundness of the evaluation design as well as addressing USAID/DRG's own strategic criteria regarding impact evaluations. The comments from EGAP should be incorporated into or addressed in the final evaluation design document, and will be used by USAID/DRG to make final determinations regarding co-funding. This peer review is in addition to the review and commenting period by HESN, USAID/DRG, and USAID/Niger described above.

USAID/DRG aims to have its comments and those of the peer review back to the PIs within a month of the submission of the evaluation design. USAID/Niger also expects that AidData will submit a draft evaluation design to the Mission for the same one month comment period. On USAID's part, NORC will consolidate feedback from USAID/Niger and USAID/DRG and provide to AidData one single set of comments/questions from USAID, in a timely manner.



In regards to the HESN award, AidData will be required to meet all obligations as previously outlined in its award, including but not limited to: financial reporting, HESN M&E indicators, annual reports, etc.

AidData will also share with its HESN AOR any draft or final report shared with USAID/Niger and USAID/DRG so that the AOR can track its progress towards final deliverables and ensure that AidData is meeting its benchmarks in a timely fashion.

USAID/Niger and USAID/DRG also require that AidData submit an analysis report upon completion of each phase of the evaluation (baseline and endline). These reports will also have a commenting period of a month to allow USAID/Niger and USAID/DRG to provide feedback. In addition to these reports, USAID/Niger requests that AidData share with the Mission POC the biannual reports required by HESN, for information purposes.

Regarding the analysis reports for each phase of the impact evaluation, USAID/Niger expects that a draft report be submitted to the Mission POC for Mission comment as well as to the USAID/DRG POC, followed by a final report, due one month after receiving the Mission's comments. AidData's Program Manager will receive and consolidate feedback, comments, and questions from USAID/Niger and USAID/DRG on submitted reports.

The format for the Baseline and Endline Analysis Report is as follows:

- Executive Summary—salient findings and recommendations, concisely stated (2 pp)
- Introduction—purpose, audience, and synopsis of task (1 p)
- Background—brief overview of the program, and purpose of the evaluation (2 pp)
- Design—data collection methods, including limitations and gaps (2 pp)
- Findings/Conclusions/Recommendations—evaluation findings discussion with understandable data visualizations for non-technical readers and broader policy findings & recommendations (31–33 pp)
- Issues—list of key technical and/or administrative concerns, if any (1–2 pp)
- References—including bibliography and other references as appropriate (as needed; not included in page count)
- Annexes—methods, schedules, interview lists and tables will be pertinent and readable. The evaluation SOW and instruments will be in the annexes. The final version of the report will be submitted to USAID/Niger in electronic format.

Quantitative and qualitative data files will be submitted electronically, to the extent this can be done without revealing confidential identifying information. Qualitative data can be submitted in French, as the language of most respondents. As most respondents will prefer to use Hausa or Zarma, translation services will be necessary to process some of the qualitative data for dissemination. The field coordinator will handle all necessary translation tasks.

The report will not exceed 40 pages, excluding table of contents, acronyms list, executive summary, references and annexes. This format is consistent with the 2011 USAID Evaluation Policy.

## Timeline

Task	Y2				Y3				Deliverables
	Fall 16	Winter 16-17	Spring 17	Summer 17	Fall 17	Winter 17-18	Spring 18	Summer 18	
Impact Evaluation Plan Finalized									Finalized Evaluation Plan
Pre-analysis plan finalized and registered									Finalized household survey firm
Baseline survey									Baseline surveys (household, key informant, and government surveys)
Baseline report									Baseline report
Endline survey									Endline surveys
Endline report									Endline report

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Research Team:

Ariel BenYishay, Phil Roessler, and Lisa Mueller will serve as co-principal investigators for the project. BenYishay, Roessler, and Mueller will be responsible for the planning and execution of all phases of the impact evaluation. They will develop the evaluation design and coordinate with a survey firm to carry out the baseline and endline evaluations.

### AidData:

AidData will be responsible for the reporting requirements of HESN, USAID/DRG, and USAID/Niger. In regards to the HESN award, AidData will be required to meet all obligations as previously outlined in its award, including but not limited to: financial reporting, HESN M&E indicators, annual reports, etc. In regards to USAID/Niger, AidData is responsible for coordinating with BenYishay, Roessler, and Mueller on the evaluation design report and analysis report at the completion of each phase of the evaluation, as well as for sharing with the Mission the reports required by HESN. AidData will review any reporting documents or any modifications to the scope of work prior to approval.

#### **Implementing Partner (Counterpart International):**

AidData will work closely with Counterpart International (CPI) to ensure the success of the evaluation. At least one of the PIs will meet with CPI to ensure the roll out of the program will coincide with the evaluation design. AidData will also hold weekly calls with CPI to ensure close coordination between treatment, AidData's evaluation, and CPIs program evaluation. As the evaluation design is carried out, the PIs will keep the implementing partner informed of the progress.

#### **USAID/Niger:**

The primary point of contact (POC) for AidData and for USAID/HESN will be Abdourahamane Hassane or a future Mission Director. A secondary POC for AidData will be [COR for PRG mechanism], primarily for project-related technical concerns. The primary POC will be responsible for ensuring that communication is maintained between the Mission, HESN, DRG, and AidData, including through the required reporting listed above. Regarding reporting requirements, the primary POC will have final approval of the three required evaluation reports, and will review for information purposes, the reports required by HESN. The technical POC will be available to serve as liaison with the implementing partner and with any technical/field-based issues that may arise. The technical POC will be included in the Mission's approval of the three evaluation reports, and will also view the interim reports required by HESN. The primary POC, however, has the responsibility of sharing these documents and soliciting the feedback and approval of others in the Mission, including the technical POC, as well as soliciting feedback from the primary POC in USAID/DRG.

#### **USAID/DRG:**

The primary POC for AidData and for USAID/HESN will be Morgan Holmes, Evaluation Specialist for USAID/DRG. The primary POC will be responsible for ensuring communication is maintained between the Mission, DRG, HESN, and AidData. The POC will also facilitate the peer review of the draft evaluation plan. The POC will be included in the Mission's approval of the three evaluation reports, and will also view the interim reports required by HESN. NORC will also have the opportunity to review the three evaluation reports. Final approval of all reports is held by the primary POC for USAID/DRG. The primary POC will also be responsible for liaising through NORC that will provide the sub-contracting and management for data collection activities.

## **USAID/HESN:**

USAID/HESN will be responsible for the day-to-day project management for this research project until the end of the HSEN cooperative agreement to AidData. This means that the AOR for the HESN award to AidData will comply with reporting requirements under the award. He/she will also conduct periodic M&E on the progress of AidData's PRG work to ensure that AidData is meeting its delivery timeframe on schedule. As necessary, the AOR will periodically communicate to USAID/Niger the status of AidData's progress, as well as immediately notify the Mission if any problems arise during the course of this impact evaluation project.

### ***AidData Staffing and Management Plan***

#### **Principal Investigators**

*Dr. Ariel BenYishay*—Dr. BenYishay is AidData's Chief Economist and Assistant Professor of Economics at the College of William and Mary. He previously served as Lecturer in Economics at the University of New South Wales in Sydney. He also served as Associate Director of Economic Analysis and Evaluation at the Millennium Challenge Corporation. He has served as the principal investigator on a variety of large-scale experiments in developing countries, including Malawi, the Philippines, and the Solomon Islands.

*Dr. Philip Roessler*—Dr. Roessler is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Government and Co-Director of the Center for African Development at the College of William and Mary. He is an expert on African politics and has conducted qualitative, quantitative and experimental studies in a range of African countries, including Sudan, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Liberia, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

*Dr. Lisa Mueller*—Dr. Mueller is an Assistant Professor of Political Science and African Studies at Macalester College. Her research focuses on civic engagement and political economy of development in Niger. She has directed surveys in Niger on protest participation and citizen-politician linkages and has conducted additional fieldwork in Guinea, Mali, and Senegal. During summer 2015 she will be a Visiting Scholar at the West African Research Center in Dakar.

#### ***Additional Personnel***

*Bachirou Ayoub Tinni, Field Coordinator*— Full-time staff member based in Niamey during baseline data collection, initial program roll-out, and potentially endline data collection. Staff member will be responsible for coordinating training of data collection team, monitoring during collection, and tracking program status and randomization compliance during initial roll-out. The coordinator would also be responsible for obtaining administrative data from relevant national sources. Depending on funding,

coordinator may return to complete endline data collection. This individual will likely have a graduate degree or studies and have previous research experience in a similar setting.

*Katherine Nolan, AidData Project Manager*- AidData staff member who will assist with compliance with USAID/ HESN and USAID/Niger reporting requirements and coordinating among team members.

*GIS Analyst*—AidData staff member who will assist in merging existing georeferenced datasets on population, economy, agriculture, ecology and other factors to ensure matched pairs are most precisely formed for the randomization.

*Policy & Communications Analyst*—AidData staff member who will assist with drafting policy briefs and communications materials to promote learning from the evaluation.